

Message Text

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53

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ADP-00 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 JUSE-00

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SNM-02 SY-10 TRSE-00 USIA-15 NSC-10

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FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7011

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USMISSION GENEVA

AMCONGEN CHIANG MAI

CINCPAC

UNCLAS RANGOON 1689

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR BM TH

SUBJECT: NARCOTICS: FURTHER BURMESE PRESS COVERAGE ON CAPTURE OF
LO HSING-HAN

REF: RANGOON 1680

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

SUMMARY: ADDITIONAL BURMESE PRESS COVERAGE OVER WEEKEND ON
CAPTURE OF LO HSING-HAN EMPHASIZED THAT EPISODE (A) DEMONSTRATED
THAI-BURMESE COOPERATION, (B) WOULD PROMOTE BETTER UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN BURMA AND NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES, (C) SHOULD PROVIDE IM-
PETUS TO CROP SUBSTITUTION PROGRAMS AND (D) DEMOLISHED ASSERTIONS
IN U.S. MAGAZINE ARTICLES AND BY "LEFTISTS" THAT GUB COOPERATING
WITH LO. END SUMMARY.

1. RANGOON SUNDAY ZGLISH LANGUAGE PAPERS CONTAINED EDITORIALS
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ON CAPTURE OF LO HSING-HAN. "WORKING PEOPLE'S DAILY" ASSERTED

THAT QUOTE FALL OF LO AND HIS OPIUM EMPIRE COULD NOT HAVE COME AT A BETTER TIME IN THE SEASON UNQUOTE, NOTING THAT OPIUM CULTIVATION BEGINS ABOUT SEPTEMBER AND THAT QUOTE THE RECENT DEMOLITION OF THE ORGANIZED INFRASTRUCTURE FOR OPIUM COLLECTION AND TRAFFICKING IS BOUND TO LEAVE A VACUUM WHICH IF PROPERLY EXPLOITED CAN BRING A TOTAL END TO OPIUM GROWING IN THE AREA UNQUOTE. EDITORIAL CONCLUDED THAT PRESENT TIME HIGHLY OPPORTUNE TO INTRODUCE OTHER CASH CROPS TO GROWERS TO SUPPLANT OPIUM. LETTER TO EDITOR IN SAME PAPER FOLLOWING DAY TOOK UP SAME THEME, NOTING THAT IT IS EASIER SAID THAN DONE BUT MAINTAINING THAT QUOTE DRIVE AGAINST REBELS AND THE OPIUM TRADE IN THE SHAN STATE SHOULD GO HAND IN HAND WITH THE DRIVE TOWARDS THE GROWING OF CROPS THAT CAN TAKE THE PLACE OF OPIUM UNQUOTE.

2. EDITORIAL IN "GUARDIAN" SUNDAY STATED THAT LO IS QUOTE WANTED IN CONNECTION WITH THE KIDNAP OF TWO SOVIET EXPERTS OVER THREE MONTHS AGO ...PLUS ATROCITIES IN THE EASTERN COMMAND AREA AND DRUG TRAFFICKING IN COLLABORATION WITH TAIWAN'S INTELLIGENCE BUREAU OF THE MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE (IBMND) UNQUOTE. EDITORIAL ADDED THAT QUOTE IT IS UP TO THE AUTHORITIES ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BORDER AND THOSE DEALING AGAINST INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS RINGS TO TAKE FURTHER ACTION, WHILE NO EFFORT WILL BE SPARED BY US TO GO AFTER LO HSING-HAN'S COHORTS UNQUOTE. EDITORIAL CONCLUDED BY NOTING THAT READER'S DIGEST CONTRIBUTOR ANTHONY PAUL WROTE IN GLOWING TERMS ABOUT LO IN MAY 73 EDITION, AND SUGGESTS THAT PAUL MIGHT NOW CARE TO REVISE HIS STORY BY QUOTING RECENT "BANGKOK POST" REPORT THAT LO'S QUOTE EMPIRE BEGAN TO CRUMBLE WHEN THE BURMESE GOVERNMENT LAUNCHED ITS OFFENSIVE AGAINST SEPARATIST REBELS UNQUOTE.

3. "WORKING PEOPLE'S DAILY" EDITORIAL ALSO STATED THAT DEMOLITION OF LO'S EMPIRE" BELIES ACCUSATIONS MADE EARLIER BY "LEFTISTS" THAT WHEN LO'S FORCES WERE PREVIOUSLY GIVEN STATUS OF SELF-DEFENSE FORCES OR LOCAL MILITIA GUB WAS PURSUING POLICY OF APPEASEMENT OF REACTIONARY FORCES WITHIN ITS BORDERS IN SPITE OF ITS DECLARED ADHERENCE TO SOCIALIST PRINCIPLES.

4. BURMESE LANGUAGE PRESS OVER WEEKEND GAVE SIMILAR FRONTPAGE NEWS COVERAGE TO LO'S CAPTURE AS REPORTED REFTEL IN CASE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPERS.

A. EDITORIAL IN "NEW LIGHT OF BURMA" NOTED APPROVINGLY THAT UNCLASSIFIED

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GUB INFORMED RTG ABOUT POSSIBLE MOVEMENT OF LO INTO THAILAND AND ADDED, QUOTE THE AUTHORITIES ON THE OTHER SIDE THUS ALERTED MANAGED TO CAPTURE THE RUNAWAY OPIUM KING. WE BELIEVE THAT THIS INCIDENT WILL PROMOTE BETTER UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN OUR COUNTRY AND NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES UNQUOTE.

B. EDITORIAL IN "WORKING PEOPLE'S DAILY" AND "BOTATAUNG'S" COLUMNIST THEIN PE MYINT ALSO EMPHASIZED FRIENDLY COOPERATION BETWEEN BURMA AND THAILAND WHICH CHARACTERIZED OPERATION AND EXPRES-

SED HOPE THAT BURMA'S NEIGHBORS ZOULD IN FUTURE CONTINUE TO CO-OPERATE WITH GUB IN ITS SUPPRESSION OF QUOTE RIGHTIST AND LEFTIST DESTRUCTIONISTS UNQUOTE.

C. "MIRROR" CARRIED COLUMN BY ZAWANA ENTITLED QUOTE THERE WILL BE NO FURTHER CAUSE FOR AMERICAN MAGAZINES TO WRITE DETRIMENTAL AND SARCASTIC ARTICLES ABOUT BURMA UNQUOTE. COLUMN ASSERTED THAT BECAUSE BURMA HAD INSISTED ON SUPPRESSING NARCOTICS ON ITS OWN, IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITS NEUTRALIST POLICY, RATHER THAN COOPERATING CLOSELY WPTH THE U.S., "TIME" AND "READER'S DIGEST" HAD WRITTEN DEROGATORY ARTICLES IMPLYING THAT GUB COLLABORATING WITH LO HSING-HAN. COLUMN COCNCLUDES THAT WITH LO'S CAPTURE, THERE IS NO LONGER CAUSE FOR U.S. MAGAZINES TO WRITE SUCH ARTICLES.
MARTIN

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